

**I-405 Corridor Environmental Program  
Early Action Mitigation Demonstration Project  
July 8, 2002**

**Background**

WSDOT is currently developing an environmental strategy and implementation process for the Corridor Environmental Program (CEP) described in Appendix J of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the I-405 Corridor Program. Strategies and implementation processes will be developed for compensatory mitigation, Endangered Species Act consultation, stormwater management, noise abatement, cultural resources, and permitting, to name a few.

Appendix J describes an early-action environmental impact mitigation decision-making process. This process will be used to identify and rank mitigation opportunities for environmental impacts resulting from the corridor transportation projects. In Chapter 3 of the FEIS, under Approach to Mitigation a commitment was made to prepare a corridor level mitigation plan that will further describe and refine the early-action mitigation process as well as describe the concurrent mitigation that will be needed. Chapter 3 provides a step-wise summary of the process to be followed to identify early-action mitigation, including the development of site selection criteria.

**Early-Action Mitigation Demonstration Project**

The early-action mitigation concept proposed for the I-405 corridor is a relatively new approach to mitigate for project impacts. Because of the complexity involved in implementing this process through many jurisdictions, WSDOT is proposing a demonstration mitigation project to pilot the early-action mitigation decision-making process. As envisioned in Appendix J, WSDOT has chosen the south Renton interchange area of I-405 and SR 167 for the demonstration pilot project.

The goals of the demonstration project are as follows:

- Pilot the early-action mitigation decision-process to be used for the corridor by developing a mitigation demonstration project that provides an agreed upon level of compensation for the environmental functions that are likely to be impacted in the south Renton interchange area;
- Establish mitigation site selection criteria that can be used for future corridor early-action mitigation projects; and
- Provide refinements and improvements for the early-action mitigation process that will be used in the future for the entire corridor.

## **Mitigation Task Force**

WSDOT is proposing the creation of a Mitigation Task Force, made up of members of the Steering Committee to assist in the development of suitable mitigation screening criteria and the selection of a qualified short-list (3-4) of mitigation demonstration projects. WSDOT will select from the short-list one or more mitigation projects to be designed and constructed. Selection will be based in large part on WSDOT's ability to acquire the mitigation site within the schedule proposed.

WSDOT proposes that the Mitigation Task Force be composed of the following organizations:

- City of Renton;
- City of Tukwila;
- WA. Dept. of Ecology;
- WA. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife;
- U. S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- National Marine Fisheries Service;
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and
- U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

WSDOT anticipates that the Mitigation Task Force will need to meet twice over a three-month time period (July through September) in order to pilot the process, finalize the evaluation criteria, and qualify a short-list of demonstration projects.

### Mitigation Demonstration Project Schedule

<b>TASK</b>	<b>FINISH DATE</b>
Establish Task Force Roles and Responsibilities	July 18, 2002
Develop Draft Mitigation Screening Criteria	July 22, 2002
Task Force Meets to Review and Finalize Criteria	August 2, 2002 (a)
Compile and Verify Mitigation Opportunities	August 2, 2002
Final Criteria Established	August 9, 2002
Mitigation Site Matrix Prepared	September 6, 2002
Task Force Meets to Score Mitigation Opportunities	September 12, 2002 (a)
Qualified Short-List Established	September 25, 2002
Compensatory Credit Established	October 25, 2002
Demonstration Projects are Scoped	January 3, 2003
Preliminary Engineering for Selected Project	April, 2003 (b)
Site Acquisition	June, 2003 (b)
Permitting	June, 2003 (b)
Construction	August, 2003 (b)

(a) Actual Date To Be Determined

(b) Preliminary Date. Dependent Upon Project Funding